

## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: General Dzu; Dave Hudson; Daniel Ellsberg  
(Col. Chau, Frank Scotten, and Ev Bumgardner  
were also present but did not participate in this  
part of the conversation.)

PLACE: Col. Chau's house

DATE: January 15, 1967

1. At a dinner given by Col. Chau, his new boss--General Dzu--made some comments relative to his new job as Deputy to General Thang in Thang's capacity as Deputy to the Chief of Staff, JGS, for RD. (Dzu formerly was in charge of HOP TAC.)

2. Dzu made the same complaint that I had heard from Chau earlier, namely that there had been no facilities whatsoever for them at the JGS: "no desk, no chair, no secretary". This indicated at least that the austere furnishings were not a personal slight towards Chau. "There was really no job over there, nothing to do," said Dzu. "It is just a paper job to give General Thang a place to go if a civilian government takes over the Ministry of RD."

3. Chau and Dzu have apparently worked together before, and relations between them seem cordial. Dzu has urged Chau to do as much traveling as he wishes for purposes of inspection or in connection with his duties to do "long-range planning". Chau is supposedly the chief advisor to the Chief of Staff on concepts and planning for RD: a good job and just the right man for it if it were not, as Chau suspects, a purely formal arrangement. Chau has suggested that he take some trips with me, and I would be very glad to take him up on his suggestion.

4. Dzu commented on General Thang that "General Thang is a very good man, very intelligent, and with great energy for work, but he is too ambitious. He wants to do everything himself. He knows nothing about how to get other people to work for him, and he will not delegate responsibility. He does not understand that, in his position, his real job is to get other people to work. He takes on more and more responsibilities so that things really do not get done properly."



5. Without being willing to name names, Dzu commented at length on the fact that poor morale throughout ARVN stemmed from lack of confidence in and respect for top GVN leadership. Each level--from squad leader to Division commander--sees that its superior officers are engaging in corrupt practices or political maneuverings and takes this for license to do the same and to ignore others from higher authority. Moreover, the top military leaders who are running the country are simply not able to capture the respect either of the Army or the people at large that is appropriate of national leadership. While they are preoccupied with politics and administration, the efficiency of the military services declines from lack of supervision. In particular, "VNAF is being ruined; there is really no commander for VNAF."

6. What is required, in Dzu's opinion, is that the military return to purely military employment, leaving the government in the hands of competent civilians, who can claim general support and responsibility. Meanwhile, until there is a reformation of the armed forces on this basis, the troops will continue to alienate the population by their practices of theft and maltreatment. Malpractices by both troops and officers reflect directly their feeling that the long war, of which they have grown very tired, cannot be won by the type of national government and leadership now in place; in this mood of despair, with respect to the usefulness of their official activities, they turn their attention to taking care of their personal needs, which are pressing in this period of inflation and are not adequately provided for by the government.

DEP:DEllsberg:joh 1/31/67

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